

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1 and 2 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 3, 6-8, 10, 14 and 15 as follows:

3. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising:

a horizontal moving mechanism horizontally moving the movable table between a first position adjacent to the portion of the stage on which the container is to be placed and a second position apart from the stage; and

a lifting mechanism vertically moving the movable table.

6. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the container is received from outside the apparatus and/or is made available for delivery to a source outside the apparatus.

7. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the container is received from outside the apparatus and/or is made available for delivery to a source outside the apparatus, the apparatus further comprising:

a moving mechanism for moving the movable table;

wherein the moving mechanism is disposed on a level lower than that of the first and second stages.

8. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said apparatus is an integrated unit, and wherein the second section is a section where the container is received from an external of the apparatus and/or is delivered to the external of the apparatus therefrom, said apparatus further comprising:

a first shutter isolating the second section from an external of the apparatus to inhibit access to the second section from the external of the apparatus; and

a second shutter disposed on a side opposite, with respect to the second section, to a side on which the first shutter is disposed.

10. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising a sensing device provided at the movable table and inspecting a condition of the substrates contained in the container.

14. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said apparatus is an integrated unit, and wherein the second section is a section where the container is received from an external of the apparatus,

said apparatus further comprising a third stage, on which a container for containing substrates therein is to be placed, provided in a third section of said apparatus,

wherein the third section is a section where the container is delivered to the external of the apparatus therefrom,

wherein the third stages has a cut-away area extending from one end of the stage, the cut-away area permits the movable table moving vertically through the cut-away area in order to lift the container from the third stage and withdraw the movable table thus lifted from above the third stage, and

wherein the moving table transports the container between the first, second and third stages.

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15. (Amended) The substrate processing apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising a passage means through which the moving table moves and transports the container between the first and second stages.

Please add the following new claims 24 and 25:

24. (New) A substrate processing apparatus comprising:

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a first stage provided in a first section of said apparatus for supporting a container for holding substrates, the first stage having a cut-away area extending from one end of the first stage;

a second stage provided in a second section of said apparatus for supporting the container for holding substrates, the second stage having a cut-away area extending from one end of the second stage; and

a movable table for supporting and carrying the container between the first and second stages, the movable table being adapted for moving vertically through the cut-away area of one of the first and second stages, lifting up the container in order to transfer the container from said one of the stages to the movable table, and withdrawing the container thus lifted from above said one of the stages in order to transport the container to another stage.

25. (New) The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the first section is a section where the substrates are taken out from the container and are put into the container,

said apparatus further comprising a processing unit that performs a treatment on the substrate taken out from the container at the first section.